

Washington, DC – Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23) hailed the Veterans Affairs rule change announced Monday that will make it easier for veterans, including those who may have been denied benefits in the past, to receive care and benefits for post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD.

**“I applaud the announcement this week by Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki that will pave the way for greater support for our veterans,” said Congressman Rodriguez, who serves on the Veterans Affairs Committee. “This is great news for the many veterans who have met obstacles in getting treatment for PTSD. I have a substantial number of veterans in my district and this new rule will provide them with greater flexibility in getting assistance with their claims.”**

Previously, veterans had to undergo lengthy investigations in order to apply for disability benefits for PTSD. The VA required extensive documentation of the specific cause of the disorder in addition to a doctor’s diagnosis, and ultimately denied benefits to thousands of veterans who were unable to document their experiences. The new reforms will simplify the process, requiring a VA doctor’s diagnosis for veterans who served in a combat zone.

**“Nearly one in five veterans suffer from PTSD or major depression, and many Texas veterans have suffered without the care they need and have earned,” Congressman Rodriguez said. “We must do a better job of addressing the mental health problems that stem from serving in combat and this change will begin that process by support our brave veterans as they transition back into civilian life with their families.”**

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